# THE 2015 AWARDS

A new and very successful departure in April 2016 was to hold the AGM, Annual Dinner and Awards presentations at Greenlands, Henley-on-Thames, Oxfordshire, a conference centre housed in a magnificent Grade II listed building. Many members chose to stay for the weekend – see the report in the June *Newsletter*. We were joined at the Dinner by Robert Stevens, Managing Director of Topsail Insurance Ltd, whose company generously assisted towards the cost of the event.

Master of Ceremonies was Canadian member John van-Schalkwyk, and many of the details about the Awards recipients which follow were based on information compiled by van-S (as he's always known) and Webmaster Daria Blackwell. The latter also produced an impressive slide show about the Awards presentation and the recipients – if you've not seen it, seek it out at www.oceancruisingclub. org, followed by ABOUT THE OCC and Awards. The handsome wooden plaques presented to all awardees were created by Past Commodore John Franklin.

Nominations for the 2016 Awards are already open – follow the links above,



MC John van-Schalkwyk

or e-mail awardsnominations@oceancruisingclub.org. Note, however, that only full members can make nominations, and that nominated passages must have been completed after 30 June 2015 (ie. no more than 18 months prior to the 30 December 2016 closing date).

The 2015 Awards were presented in three groups between the main courses of the meal, and are taken here in the order in which they were announced. Photographs taken at the event are by Kathy Mansfield [www.kathymansfieldphotos.com] and Alex Blackwell [www.whiteseahorse.ie].

#### THE DAVID WALLIS TROPHY

For the 'most outstanding, valuable or enjoyable contribution to Flying Fish', as nominated by the Editorial Sub-Committee.

In 2004, to mark the Club's 50th anniversary, Past Commodore Tony Vasey researched and wrote up the Club's history as *The First Fifty Years*. Ten years on, Past Commodore and Club Historian **Bill McLaren** offered to bring it up-to-date – an offer he began to regret when he realised the amount of work involved. Nevertheless he stuck at the task, consulting all the major players, re-reading *Flying Fish*, *Newsletters* and *Minutes*, and putting it all together to produce the highly readable *Diamond Supplement* for *Flying Fish* 2015/1.

This was by no means Bill's first venture into print. His first Flying Fish article,



#### Past Commodore Bill McLaren holds up the David Wallis Trophy and his commemorative plaque

Vagrant's Voyages, appeared way back in 1997, to be followed by eight more as he, Jane and their Bowman 40 Vagrant of Clyde ranged around the Atlantic and Pacific, from south to north, concluding with a figure of eight circumnavigation of New Zealand, a passage across the south Pacific to Chile and on to the Falklands, followed by the long voyage to the Azores and then home. After his return Bill served as Commodore between 2009 and 2012, before taking on

the role of Club Historian just in time for the Club's Diamond Jubilee.

The Diamond Supplement fulfilled all the criteria for the David Wallis Trophy, but whereas many previous winners have been selected primarily for being 'enjoyable', Bill's is not only that, but will be of immense value to OCC historians in future years.



#### THE OCC AWARD OF MERIT

One or more awards, open to members or non-members who have performed some outstanding voyage, achievement or service to the sailing community.

This year the OCC Award of Merit, which may recognise either members or non-members, was shared among multiple members and the local Port Officer Representatives, all of whom made exceptional efforts to assist the people of Vanuatu after the devastation caused by Cyclone *Pam* in March 2015. In alphabetical order the recipients were: Sam and Jess Bell, PORs Vanuatu; Martin and Elizabeth Bevan of Caduceus; Dennis and Sherry Day of Trillium; Graham and Avril Johnson of Dream Away; Tom Partridge and Susie Plume of Adina; Jonathan and Donna Robinson of Chez Nous; and Brian Wallace and Sue Dracott of Darramy.

On 13 March last year Cyclone *Pam*, a category 5 hurricane with wind gusts up to 200mph, swept through Vanuatu killing 16 and destroying or seriously damaging 90% of the buildings in the capital, Port Vila. Even so, it became a gathering point for yachts wanting to help. Port Officer Representatives **Sam and Jess Bell** quickly realised that

# 4000 litres of water and 50 cases of tuna delivered to local people in Vanuatu

information and logistics were the two largest challenges that yachts could help address, and formed a network to share information and deliver goods and services to the more remote islands. They helped establish Wita Aid



[www.witaaid.org] which enlisted three volunteer superyachts, OCC boats and others to deliver fresh water to hard hit communities – 2 million litres so far. As Jess Bell puts it:

"It was quite remarkable to see how the yachts could help. There were many large aid organizations here but they were really struggling to get accurate information and the delivery of items was very expensive. The yachts were valuable because the same sets of eyes were looking at different places so assessments of which areas were in the most desperate state could be submitted. We could then suggest to other yachts where to visit and what could be taken that would be of most use.

The other great value of the yachts was that the help continued over months. When a disaster hits, the recovery period is very long. Even now, one year post *Pam*, many villages still are without roofs, gutters, and crops. We hope many more yachts will come this year, to cruise our beautiful country and also to give a hand where needed."



Roving Rear Commodores Martin and Elizabeth Bevan were in New Zealand, halfway though their circumnavigation aboard Caduceus, their Amel 54, when Cyclone Pam hit Vanuatu. As well as donations of money they were given many muchneeded items by family, friends and organizations. These they loaded aboard

Dr Elizabeth Bevan treats an infected wound as Martin looks on Caduceus together with medical supplies, food, building equipment, water tanks and even seeds for planting, and reached Vanuatu in late May, in time to make two five-week round trips to the outer islands which had been ignored by the emergency response.

Elizabeth is a retired GP, and after dealing with a good deal of red tape she was finally accredited by the Vanuatu Ministry of Health to practice medicine in the islands. This allowed them to top up their supplies from the various NGOs and charities, as well as from the central pharmacy at the hospital. They set up and ran clinics, and did school medical inspections to report on the general health of the children.

See the September 2015 Newsletter, and Project Vanuatu in Flying Fish 2015/2, for the full story.

Dennis and Sherry Day arrived aboard *Trillium*, their Halberg Rassy 48, towards the end of June. During an earlier season in the islands they had become involved with one particular village, and following Cyclone *Pam* they returned to that village with aid, materials and skills. In a two month period they helped restore water catchment systems in the primary school, installed solar lighting in the church, distributed food, clothing, housewares, school supplies, tools and petrol. They even provided clean drinking water from their watermaker.

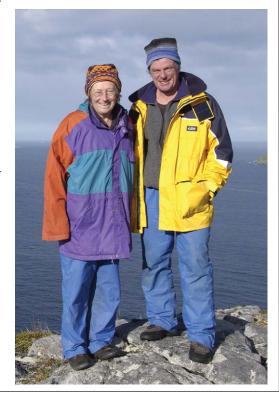
The school needed a computer, so they bought one and Sherry taught people how to use it. She also started 'Dresses for Dignity' to raise matching funds to buy new Mother Hubbard dresses and other clothing for women and teenagers.

**Graham and Avril Johnson**, our Membership Secretaries for ten years in the 1990s and later Roving Rear Commodores for seven years, have a wide network of friends in

New Zealand which ensured a flood of relief aid goods arriving aboard their Peterson 44, Dream Away. They reached Vanuatu at the beginning of July and voyaged through the entire island chain, visiting many remote locations and villages where aid was needed. Help ranged from supplying clinics with baby clothes to providing building materials and designs for new cyclone shelters. Graham, a retired engineer, repaired and rebuilt power systems, equipped local people with tools and skills, and generally fixed a range of things from computers to ancient sewing machines. Avril's IT expertise produced great promotional materials for future events and ventures. They wrote that:

"People didn't 'expect' anything from us. There was a quiet dignity in the

Avril and Graham Johnson a few years ago while in cooler climes



way they asked for a tool or some expertise that they needed, but they expected to reciprocate in whatever way they could – usually giving away their only commodity, the fresh vegetables they were only beginning to be able to grow again, and apologising that they could not give us fruit as these crops take much longer to re-start. We always 'gratefully received' the minimum we could get away with."

Adina, a Hylas 46, was on the hard in Vanuatu when the cyclone hit. **Tom Partridge** and Susie Plume returned from New Zealand, launched their boat – which, fortunately, was undamaged – and immediately began co-ordinating the efforts of OCC boats and other members of the Pacific sailing community. They helped raise funds, and were



Tom Partridge and Susie Plume

then able to provide and distribute everything from building materials to first aid supplies and clothes to the outlying islands. Susie herself ran a first aid clinic. Tom and Susie wrote:

"We think the OCC deserves a big compliment for the role they played in liaising with the press and utilising the OCC website to provide updates which helped the many yachts that travelled to Vanuatu to provide support."

Jonathon and Donna Robinson left Fiji aboard their Leopard 40 Chez Nous and

arrived in Vanuatu at the end of April, staying until the beginning of September. *Chez Nous* joined *Sea Mercy* [www.seamercy.org], a floating healthcare clinic, even though she was a non-medical boat. Jonathon and Donna delivered food and aid, and backed up the medical boats. They then worked with Vanuatu and NGO officials to try to improve the procedures for distributing aid to the smaller out islands.

Donna Robinson holds out the Sea Mercy flag

Brian Wallace and Sue Dracott in *Darramy*, a Beneteau First 405, also joined Sea Mercy, arriving in mid May and staying until early September. She was loaded to the gunwales with aid, much of which had been donated from Australia and New Zealand, and ferried supplies to the out islands. Once there they found the greatest need





#### Brian Wallace and Sue Dracott

was to repair water collection systems, and by the time they left they had provided water storage for over 200,000 litres. They also helped repair several community fishing boats.

Many other vessels, including several superyachts, assisted in the aid effort to Vanuatu following the devastation caused by Cyclone *Pam*, as did various NGOs including Sea Mercy and the Butterfly Trust [www.butterflytrust.

org]. Some of the cruisers – from Australia, New Zealand, Sweden, the UK and USA and other countries – stayed for several months, while other yachts gave assistance as they were passing through. The cruising community stepped up to the plate when they were needed – indicative of the special breed of people who make up this unique worldwide fellowship. Visit the OCC website [www.oceancruisingclub.org] for more details of the non-OCC yachts and aid agencies involved in the relief effort.



#### THE GEOFF PACK MEMORIAL AWARD

Presented in memory of the late Geoff Pack, Editor of Yachting Monthly magazine and OCC Rear Commodore 1993–97, for the person (member or non-member) who, by his or her writing, has done most to foster and encourage ocean cruising in

yachts or other small craft.

In addition to co-authoring her first book, Voyaging with Kids: A guide to family life afloat, very favourably reviewed in Flying Fish 2015/2, Behan Gifford also writes an informative and entertaining blog about the world-wide travels of

The Gifford family in Papua New Guinea, 2012



her family – husband Jamie and children Niall, Mairen and Siobhan – aboard their Stevens 47 *Totem* at www.sailingtotem.com.

At the time the family sailed out of Puget Sound on 21 August 2008, their children were aged 9, 6, and 4. Since then they've explored the Pacific, spent time in Australia – so their normally home-schooled kids could experience the 'real thing' – become immersed in the different languages, histories and cultures of dozens of countries, and made hundreds of friends, both aboard other yachts and



Behan Gifford, recipient of the 2015 Geoff Pack Memorial Award

ashore. Behan describes and discusses their experiences with a fine eye for detail and humour, but also with detachment regarding decisions and (occasionally) worries. Voyaging with Kids tackles everything from choosing a suitable boat through what to bring along, how to stay safe and healthy, provisioning in faraway places, and activities to pass the time or introduce young crew members to new experiences. Prospective cruising parents will find the chapter on boat schooling particularly valuable, with more information on the topic on the blog. Also valuable are the insights from more than 65 other cruising families which provide varied first-hand perspectives from both parents and kids enjoying similar lifestyles. The book concludes with interviews and letters contributed by former cruising kids, about the great experiences they remember and how those experiences shaped their future lives.

Both book and blog are generously illustrated, often with photographs of kids doing interesting things in exotic places, and the appendices are comprehensive, including 13 pages of resources and references used in researching material. Flying Fish's reviewer predicted that Voyaging with Kids was 'destined to be a best-seller in the sailing books category ... the parenting bible for the cruising family'.



### THE QUALIFIERS' MUG

Awarded for the most ambitious or arduous qualifying voyage by a new member or members, as submitted for publication in Flying Fish or the Newsletter.

Competition for the 2015 Qualifier's Mug – or in this instance Qualifiers' Mug – was of a particularly high standard, with **Debi Dennis and Jack Markin** very worthy winners for their passage across the North Atlantic aboard their 1969-built Ohlson 38, *Iroquois*. For the full story, turn to page 55 of this issue and read how they started sailing in dinghies on the Great Lakes, then progressing to cruising after buying *Iroquois* in 2010. Their decision to cross the North Atlantic to Scotland – without insurance due to

Jack Markin and Debi Dennis were presented with the 2015 Qualifier's Mug

their lack of experience — was based on the 'because it's there' principle ... "We did the passage simply because we could, in the sense that we had the boat and we had the knowledge, we had the persistence, if not the normally requisite experience".





seasickness, Debi and Jack left from Shelburne, Nova Scotia on 17 June 2015 and made landfall at Oban, Scotland on 19 July after 32 days at sea. During that time they experienced everything from seven days of very light winds ('miserable, difficult and frustrating'), to 36 hours of winds in the 50–60 knot range ('too much, all you can do is whatever you can, while you wait and hope for it to stop'). All were met with quiet competence and practised teamwork in a well-chosen and well-equipped boat. Their descriptions of life at sea are often lyrical, doubtless partly due to the newness of it all, but the sheer physical challenge of hand-steering 90 minute shifts in winds gusting above 60 knots is not overlooked. Visit www.sailblogs.com/member/debiandjack for more details and their movements since.



#### THE RAMBLER MEDAL

For the most challenging short voyage made by a member or members. (The definition of 'short' became somewhat elastic over the years, so is now defined as a voyage of three weeks or less and covering no more than 1000 miles, though this may form part of a longer cruise.)

Although it's little more than 600 miles from Bermuda across the Gulf Stream to Newport, RI, they can be a particularly unpleasant 600 miles, as experienced by **Peter McCrea and Doug Theobolds** in August last year.

Panacea, Peter's Freedom 32 cat sloop in which he has logged over 70,000 sea miles, had been left in St George's earlier in the year when a moped accident rendered Peter and his son John unable to sail her home. On recovery, and after careful thought, Peter asked his old friend Doug Theobalds to stand in – an excellent choice, as became clear. Despite missing their usual weather briefing they decided to sail on the morning of Thursday 6 August, in initially benign conditions. Next morning, however, Florida-based weather guru Chris Parker predicted that 'a massive, energetic system akin to a nor'easter

would create untenable sea states in the region of the Gulf Stream for which *Panacea* was heading', and despite altering course and reefing to cut speed they were unable to avoid the edge of it.

At about 0300 on Sunday morning Panacea was knocked flat by an outsize wave, leading to not just water and chaos below, but also an incipient electrical fire. Their actions in the aftermath – coping with immediate problems, jury-rigging power to the autopilot, stove and other essentials, and completing the passage to Newport without assistance - turned a potentially dangerous situation into a successful passage, and it was for this demonstration of resourcefulness, resilience and self-sufficiency that the Award was



Doug Theobolds accepts Rambler Medal plaques for himself and Peter McCrea from newly elected Commodore Anne Hammick

made. See Fetching Panacea on page 137 of this issue for the full story.

All those present at the Awards presentation were delighted that Doug Theobalds was able to attend to receive both his and Peter's awards.



#### THE AUSTRALIAN TROPHY

Donated by the late Sid Jaffe, twice Rear Commodore Australia, the Australian Trophy is awarded for the most challenging voyage made by an Australian



member or members which either starts or ends in Australia. It is decided by ballot of the Australian membership.

Mark Morwood (left) receives the Australian Trophy plaque from Nick Halsey, Regional Rear Commodore for North East Australia Mark Morwood (Australian) and Marta Portoles (Spanish), winners of the 2015 Australian Trophy, met in Boston in 1990. Twenty-two years later, and after six years' work on their Catana 48 catamaran *Por Dos*, they left to sail the world with 12-year-old twins Alec and Roan. From Massachusetts they sailed south to the Bahamas, across the Pond to the Med, back to the Caribbean, and continued through the Panama Canal to the Galapagos. From there their course took them to the Marquesas, followed by the coconut milk run through the South Pacific to Tahiti, on to Suwarrow, Tonga, Fiji, Vanuatu and finally New Caledonia. There they sold *Por Dos*, but stayed aboard to assist the new owners as they sailed her the 790 miles to Brisbane. They are now settled ashore – at least until the boys finish their final three years of high school.

Their sailing experiences are recounted on their blog at www.sailblogs.com/member/pordos.



#### THE VERTUE AWARD

For the North American member who best represents the spirit of OCC Founder Humphrey Barton, through sailing achievements or service to the club and cruising community. It was presented, and is decided, by the North American Regional Rear Commodores.

The 2015 Vertue Award went to **Sid and Rebecca Shaw**, as reported in the March 2016 *Newsletter*.

Both joined the OCC in 1996. Sid cited a 1965 passage from the Galapagos Islands to Hiva Oa, Marquesas in a 35ft Piver-designed trimaran, Cygnus-A as his qualifying voyage – see *The World's First Cruising Boat Solar Panel* in *Flying Fish* 2014/2. Rebecca's passage was a slightly more modest Beaufort, North Carolina to Virgin Gorda, BVI in the couple's 33ft Korora, but dated back nearly as far, to 1972 – see *The Small World of the Vast Oceans*, *Flying Fish* 2014/1. Between 2000 and 2009 they covered some 18,000 miles aboard their Halberg Rassy 352, *Dovka*, mostly in the eastern Mediterranean, though taking time out to crew from Fiji to Sydney in the 65ft cutter, *Van Diemen III* – see www.dovka.com.

Even before returning full time to their home near Washington DC they had taken on the role



Sid and Rebecca Shaw were presented with the Vertue Award in the United States last October

of joint Regional Rear Commodores for the USA South East region, remaining in post from 2008 until 2014 and working hard to ensure the Club thrived in their area. Their cruises-in-company and parties became a high point for many members, and the citation included particular praise for having been 'extraordinarily generous with their time and talents, and for playing hosts to so many members from around the globe'.

#### THE ROSE MEDAL

For the most challenging short-handed voyage made by a member or members.

The 2015 Rose Medal was awarded to Roving Rear Commodores Chris Cromey and Suzanne Hills of Whanake, for sailing – not motoring – the 1200 miles north through the Chilean channels from the Beagle Channel north to Valdivia, as recounted in Flying Fish 2014/2 – Uphill Through The Chilean Channels. The common knowledge is that sailing north is not possible. Even the Patagonia and Tierra del Fuego Nautical Guide states that, 'Calms or strong north or northwest winds are the only two possibilities in the Chilean Channels', but Chris and Suzanne were not to be deterred. Their answer was to 'take plenty of time, allowing at least four months to complete the channels' (in the event they took seven). 'This length of time means that the majority of passages can be done under sail in force 3–5 winds, supplemented with efficient motoring in the calms and quiet weather'.



Chris Cromey and Suzanne Hills' Whanake sits out a williwaw in Caleta Mousse during their transit of the Chilean channels

This strategy served them well. On an average day they would make about 15 miles progress though 25 miles or more through the water - in winds gusting up to 25 knots. At night they moored to trees, using very long lines. It was cold and wet and sometimes uncomfortable. but it was not

always upwind – on several occasions they enjoyed good winds, including a run of southeast and south winds for several days. As Suzanne added in a subsequent e-mail, "Our whole aim was to sail the channels and so we avoided unpleasant conditions. Often it was pleasant, occasionally it was unpleasant, but mostly it was not unpleasant. We are advocates for sailing ... people heading north are much more likely to encounter unpleasant conditions by motoring or motor-sailing, because they push on in marginal conditions. We feel very fortunate that in the 21st century there remain wild and undeveloped sailing regions".

Turn to page 63 for the next leg of Chris and Suzanne's voyage – 5000 Miles in 'The Variables'.

#### THE OCC PORT OFFICER MEDAL

Instituted in 2008, the Port Officer Medal is awarded to one or more Port Officer(s) or Port Officer Representative(s) who has/have provided outstanding service to the Club and the wider sailing community by developing and promoting their port, harbour or area.

Our Port Officers give remarkable service – they fix things, they make things work – and if they can't, they invariably 'know a man who can'. As in previous years, two candidates stood out amongst the many nominations.

**Donal McClement** has recently retired as our Port Officer in Crosshaven, Ireland, after more than 20 years of consistent and stalwart service. He is an experienced sailor, who started almost 70 years ago in Cadet dinghies and has since embraced everything from 505s to offshore racers, not to mention a great number of cruising boats.

As well as representing Ireland, the UK and Switzerland at international regattas, Donal skippered the RAF Sailing Association's UFO 34 Black Arrow to win Class IV in the infamous 1979 Fastnet Race. Between 1986 and 2004 he was heavily involved in setting up and developing Cork Week and racing classic yachts in the Med, as well as skippering six transatlantic passages and sailing 'half a circumnavigation'. On retiring from the RAF, in which he was a Navigator, Donal returned to live in Cork where he set up the Crosshaven Boatyard and Brokerage Service. As Port Officer, his experience and local knowledge were a great asset to visiting sailors. The role of Port Officer Crosshaven has now been handed on to Mike Hodder.

Oliver Solanas Heinrichs, our Port Officer in Fuerteventura, Canary Islands, comes from a strong family sailing tradition – his father lived aboard for many years, while his uncle completed a circumnavigation – and he has sailed the Canary Islands and

Madeira mostly singlehanded. He is currently Vice President of ANAVRE, La Asociación de Navegantes de Recreo (the Spanish Cruising Association), and representative for several international associations on Fuerteventura in addition to the OCC.

Oliver was praised for his enthusiastic determination to meet every boat and his attitude that 'nothing is ever too much trouble'. He works with maritime conferences and boat shows, as a safety officer, and as the Spanish press contact for the ARC. He is currently editing *The Best* 

Oliver Solanas Heinrichs, Port Officer Representative for Fuerteventura, Canary Islands, recipient of one of the two Port Officer medals for 2015



of Cruising Canary Islands with editor Mike Westin, intended not only as a cruising guide but also to advise on shoreside facilities and attractions.

Oliver summed up his approach as: "For me, it is very important that sailors belong to an association helping the sailing community, not to mention how useful it is to arrive at an unknown island or city and have already a contact there, a friend". It would be hard to describe the role of an OCC Port Officer more aptly.



#### THE VASEY VASE

Presented by past Commodore Tony Vasey and his wife Jill, the Vasey Vase is awarded for a 'voyage of an unusual or exploratory nature' made by a member or members.

The 2015 Vasey Vase was awarded to Australian doctor **John Vallentine** for a series of interesting and challenging voyages over a ten year period aboard his 1973-built Peterson 46 *Tainui*. During this time he has devoted six months of each year to providing medical services to remote Aboriginal outstations in the western Australian deserts, and the other six months to sailing – mostly to cold climates and rugged, isolated locations.

In 2005 Tainui sailed from Hobart to New Zealand's sub-antarctic islands, re-crossed the Tasman Sea and returned to Sydney via Nelson and Lord Howe Island. The following year she revisited New Zealand en route to the Chatham Islands and on across the Southern Ocean to spend two years cruising Patagonia. After sailing north up the



John Vallentine, winner of the Vasey Vase for a succession of challenging passages

Atlantic John visited the North American East Coast, before continuing to Scotland via Iceland, the Faroes and the Shetlands. In 2011 and 2012 he cruised the Baltic Sea, wintering *Tainui* ashore at Tromsø in Arctic Norway.

From there *Tainui* made the passage round North Cape to the Barents and White Seas, and in 2013 became only the second foreign yacht – and the first not to be flying the Russian flag – to voyage from the White Sea through Russia and Ukraine to the Black Sea via the Volga and Don Rivers. See *Following the Volga Vikings* in *Flying Fish* 2013/2.

# Maxine Maters accepted the Vasey Vase on behalf of her skipper, John Vallentine

John's crew for the voyage was Maxine Maters, a Dutch national with 20 years' experience of living in Russia, whose command of the language was invaluable. They are currently working on a guide book to the route to be published later this year – visit www.sailinginrussia.org and www.tainui.org for more details.

As John was on passage in the Pacific at the time of the Awards presentations, Maxine attended to accept it in his place.



# THE JESTER MEDAL

Donated by the Jester Trust in 2006 as a way to perpetuate the spirit and ideals epitomised by Blondie Hasler and Mike Richey aboard *Jester*, and open to both members and nonmembers, the Jester Medal is presented for a noteworthy singlehanded voyage in a boat





of 30ft or less overall, or for an outstanding contribution to the art of singlehanded sailing.

Rory McDougall is a man who follows his dreams. At the age of 19 his dream was to circumnavigate aboard the smallest multihull ever, so in 1991 he started to build Cooking Fat, a 21ft Wharramdesigned Tiki catamaran, in a barn near Totnes, Devon. It took him a year to sail his bright red boat to New Zealand, where he remained for four years. Continuing on around the world, singlehanded for about half the voyage, he finally returned to Dartmouth in 1997 almost exactly six years after departing. Cooking Fat had indeed

Rory McDougall with the Jester Medal and accompanying plaque

become – and remains – the smallest catamaran ever to circumnavigate. Visit www.roryandcookie. com for more details.

Thirteen years later it was time to test the Rory and Cookie partnership again, so he entered the 2010 Jester Challenge from Plymouth to Newport (see www. jesterinfo.org and www. roryandcookie.blogspot. co.uk). After 34 days of upwind struggle, Cookie was pipped to the post by just two hours – she is believed to be the smallest catamaran ever to sail the upwind route across the North Atlantic - after



Cooking Fat at the start of the 2010 Jester Challenge

which it took Rory only 22 days to return to England, again singlehanded. Of that return passage he wrote, "A slow start for the first three days, then we had a weather front pass over and we were off, riding southwest winds the whole way for the next 19 days. I got bored and read five paperbacks in all...".



#### THE WATER MUSIC TROPHY

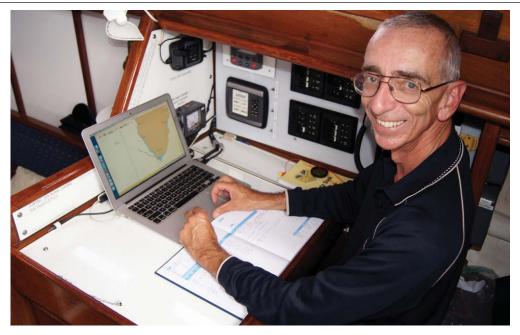
Awarded to the member or members who has/have contributed most to the OCC by way of providing cruising, navigation or pilotage information.

This year the Water Music Trophy goes to Australian member **Mike Reynolds** of *Zen Again*, a sailor and consultant in electronic engineering. He has created a repository of KAP charts and promoted the use of SEAiq software in a package for iPad so that KAP files can be used in real time with live NMEA data shared by wifi aboard. (In plain English for the rest of us, that means that one can now overlay a satellite picture from Google Earth on a chart from OpenCPN.)

Mike and his wife Nicki are currently on passage to the UK from New Zealand, and on learning that he had been awarded the Water Music Trophy Mark wrote:

"I sincerely thank the OCC for this award which came as a complete surprise. To be recognized in this way is very pleasing.

KAP libraries of GoogleEarth imagery for marine navigation would



Mike Reynolds at his chart table aboard Zen Again

not be happening without the free software created by Paul Higgins. His GE2KAP software initiated all which has followed. If you use KAP files I ask you to go to Paul's web site at www.gdayii.ca and click on the Donate button. My part was simply to gather all the KAP files I could find, create others I needed, organize them all into geographical areas, and make them freely available on the internet. Additionally, I provided tips for safe use of KAP files.

One wonders how long it will be before we can download real-time high-resolution imagery at sea. We'd know who's in that anchorage around the point before getting there! AIS with pictures. Suddenly cloudy England seems like a nice place to cruise!"



# THE OCC SEAMANSHIP AWARD

Presented by Past Commodore John Franklin and his wife Jenny in 2014, and open to both members and non-members, it is intended to recognise exceptional feats or acts of seamanship.

This Award recognises **Bob** and **Mona Jankowski** of Continuum, for the heroic rescue of Randy and Dawn Ortiz from Nirvana Now, which was taking on water in the Pacific. They motored for more than 40 hours into strong winds and rough seas, standing two-hour watches in order to maintain radio contact with the stricken vessel. The situation was critical when Continuum arrived on the scene, but a safe transfer was achieved by dinghy thanks to the seamanship of the crew.

It all started on 6 April 2015 with news via the SSB Pacific Seafarers Net that another

Bob and Mona
Jankowski
receive the OCC
Seamanship
Award plaque
from Nina Kiff
(centre), Past
Regional Rear
Commodore
New Zealand

NEV ZAAAN)

AOT LAKO

Discovery

Bysicovery

Common Common

yacht about 200 miles distant was having problems. Bob and Mona

were asked to contact her direct, and learned that her forestay had separated from the deck and she was having steering difficulties. Both boats were about 1200 miles from land. By the following morning the gap had narrowed to 137 miles, but *Nirvana Now* had lost her steering, was taking on water through the rudder post, and was taking breaking seas over her bow having deployed a sea anchor. The two yachts agreed to stay in radio contact every two hours, and Bob and Mona now began standing two-hour watches, motor-sailing to increase their speed.

Every two hours Bob plotted *Nirvana Now*'s set and drift in case they lost radio contact. By dawn on 8 April they were 10 miles apart, but there was still no AIS signal or VHF contact, just SSB radio. *Continuum* was still motor-sailing hard to windward, into seas averaging 3–4m. With 5 miles to go they gained visual contact. Owners Randy and Dawn managed to launch their aluminium dinghy from the pitching foredeck, mount the outboard, and throw in some salvaged belongings. As they left *Nirvana Now*'s side, *Continuum*, with Mona at the wheel, took up station about 40m astern. Randy and Dawn approached their port quarter, handed up their rescued possessions and scrambled aboard via the sugar-scoop stern. Soon *Continuum*'s cockpit was filled with smiles and an air of



relief. By this time Nirvana Now was low in the water – still floating, but with just a few hours remaining. The rescue had been carried out with no time to spare.

Bob and Mona aboard Continuum in Auckland

#### THE OCC AWARD

Made to the member or members who has/have done most to 'foster and encourage ocean cruising in small craft and the practice of seamanship and navigation in all branches'.

The OCC Award was presented to Tom and Vicky Jackson of *Sunstone* for their many cruising and racing achievements over 34 years and almost 200,000 miles, aboard their 40ft Sparkman & Stephens sloop. In 2007 they received the Barton Cup for their 80,000



mile circumnavigation, which included rounding of the five great capes – see *The Accidental Circumnavigation*, Flying Fish 2008/1. In early 2015 they were chosen to receive the Cruising Club of America's prestigious Blue Water Medal.

Tom and Vicky Jackson were presented with the OCC Award in New York in March, by then Commodore John Franklin

Tom and Vicky both learned to sail as children, met while crewing on a Fastnet Race, became engaged during a cruise from Spain to England, and married in 1972. Six years

later they moved aboard a Rustler 31, and then bought *Sunstone*, their 1965 varnished S&S sloop in 1981. Nevertheless *Sunstone* proved competitive racing offshore, winning the 1985 Channel Race overall and her class in four of the eight Fastnet Races she completed with Tom and Vicky. She was twice a member of the English team in the RORC Commodores' Cup, including the winning team in 1996.

In 1997 Tom took early retirement as Principal of Portsmouth College and Vicky as Assistant Dean of Faculty at Southampton Solent University. Two weeks later they sailed away to begin world cruising. They have crossed the Atlantic twice and the Pacific Ocean six times, five of those between New Zealand and Alaska, visiting the more remote Fijian islands, Guam, Japan, the Aleutian islands, Alaska, Vancouver, Hawaii and Western Samoa. Their six-year circumnavigation was eastward, taking in the five great southern capes, but also reaching 61°N and 57°S. They have continued to race, competing in the Bermuda Race and winning their divisions in the Sydney-Hobart and Swiftsure Races, the latter organised by Canada's Royal Victoria Yacht Club. After returning to New Zealand in 2008 they won the Round North Island Two-Handed Race, and completed the Round New Zealand Two-Handed Race in 2012, for which they were awarded the Royal Cruising Club's Challenge Cup. They finally

settled ashore in New Zealand in 2013, after 35 years of living permanently aboard.

Their praise of the OCC rings very true:

"We joined the Ocean Cruising Club nearly 20 years ago just before we departed from the UK to start world cruising. Before that our sailing community had been purely that of offshore racing. It was a revelation to us that there was an organisation that set out to serve the needs of the only truly global village, that of longdistance cruising sailors. The longer we have been members the more we have gained. Much of this has been from other



Tom and Vicky aboard Sunstone

individual members or Port Officers, or indeed from members we have never met but whose accounts we have read in *Flying Fish*. There are even members we have never met, with whom we have exchanged regular emails and consider friends when separated by 180° of longitude. That is the nature of the global village that the OCC serves so well."

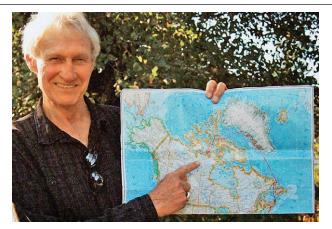
Tom and Vicky have done more than their share to contribute to this pool of knowledge, first contributing to Flying Fish back in 1999, with fourteen further articles—all illustrated by Vicky's striking photographs—to date. Their latest, Alone on the Ocean ~ Passage Making, will be found on page 145 of this issue. The Award presentation was made in New York in March 2015 by then Commodore John Franklin.



#### THE BARTON CUP

The OCC's premier award, recognising the most challenging voyage made by a member or members.

Winner of the 2015 Barton Cup was **Michael Johnson** for his two-year transit of the Northwest Passage from the Chesapeake Bay to Alaska aboard his 44ft staysail schooner *Gitana*, as described in *Flying Fish* 2015/1 – see *The Northwest Passage: Two Difficult Ice* 



#### Michael Johnson indicates Gitana's route through the Northwest Passage

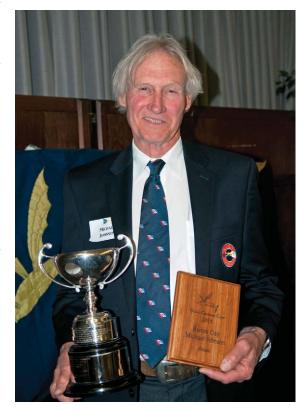
Years, page 119. The transit took place during a period that was particularly challenging due to ice conditions, which caused many vessels to turn back. From crossing the Arctic Circle northbound off Greenland on 13 August 2013 to recrossing it

southbound on 9 September 2014 *Gitana* sailed some 4200 miles, as well as enduring temperatures of minus 56°C (minus 68°F) while laid up ashore at Cambridge Bay.

Michael was born in Virginia in 1944, and served in the US Army as a paratrooper

with training in Arctic warfare. Later he earned a doctorate from the College of William & Mary in Virginia. He has sailed for much of his adult life, in a wide variety of craft including oyster skipjacks on the Chesapeake Bay, STA schooners, square-rigged barquentines, East African dhows and Javanese phinisis, as well as small vachts of all kinds. On these vessels he has served as captain, navigator, expedition leader, boatswain, commercial fisherman and crew, though by way of a change he has also paddled a dugout solo down the May and Sepik Rivers of New Guinea. He is particularly partial to schooners, and has owned and sailed Gitana for the past 16 years, covering more than 125,000 miles.

Michael previously received the Barton Cup in 1990 for his east-west rounding of Cape Horn in 85 days in an engineless 32ft cutter. In August 1994 he completed a 5½ year east-west circumnavigation south of the five great southern capes, sending accounts of some parts of the voyage to Flying Fish. These appeared between 1990 and 1995, and are all available on the OCC website.



Michael Johnson, winner of the Barton Cup for the second time

